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**Middle East economic reforms present
vast opportunities to Korean companies:
HSBC Middle East Forum**

HSBC's Middle East experts expect that the region's strong drive for economic reforms will provide significant opportunities to Korean businesses, in the fields of infrastructure, energy transition, bio-technology and more.

The Chief Executive and senior leaders from HSBC Middle East, North Africa and Turkey (MENAT) presented their specialist view on the region's economic transformation and the potential opportunities available to Korean companies, at the Middle East Forum that HSBC Korea hosted for its corporate clients on 16 May at the Seoul Plaza Hotel.

The event reflects high level of interests of Korean companies in the Middle East they recognize the potential for huge growth in these rapidly changing markets.

HSBC experts shared insights on the unprecedented economic diversification underway in the region, and the ambition to grow the non-oil sector to build a sustainable economy. Economic reforms are prioritising diversification and liberalisation, transition to net zero, infrastructure development, digitisation, investment incentives and favorable investment legislations.

For the UAE, trade and investment in energy transition will create significant opportunities. The view is based on the recent agreement between Korea and the UAE to cooperate in the areas of nuclear plants, energy and defence industry and in particular, the 2050 net zero target both countries are committed to. Specifically, future energy, bio technology, carbon capture, smart farming, green hydrogen, water and nuclear plants could be areas of interest for them. Others include health care, transportation and knowledge based service to support population growth.

As with Saudi Arabia, opportunities could be found in infrastructure development, refineries and petrochemical and renewable energy.

According to the team of Middle East experts, there is a notable shift in the sophistication of trade between the two markets, and increase in high-end technology manufacturing, signalling the pace of economic diversification of MENAT economies.

HSBC experts also provided guidance on how to do business successfully in the region. Notably, the capability of coming up with innovative solutions was mentioned

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as one of the key elements. Making use of the increasing bilateral cooperation between the two markets was also pointed out as being important.

Simon Williams, Senior Economist for Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa, "Led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE, the Middle East is passing through a phase of strong economic growth and rapid economic change - a marked contrast with the much more troubled performance of most other major emerging and developed markets. The outlook is strong, buoyed by robust growth momentum, subdued inflation, low debt and currency stability. This will bring strong demand for goods, services and capital, especially from economies like South Korea where trade and investment ties already have a firm foundation."

Stephen Moss, Regional Chief Executive, Middle East North Africa and Turkey (MENAT), HSBC Bank Middle East, said: "HSBC connects the business corridors linking clients to the world's fastest-growing regions – the Middle East and Asia. HSBC's unique heritage and relationships in both places put us at the forefront of financing the future, as we support our clients to invest in a region that is home to some of the world's most ambitious economic diversification programmes."

Eunyoung Jung, President and CEO, HSBC Korea, stated, "In Korea, we have built our reputation as the most trusted banking name for doing business in the Middle East. We are more than excited to continuously support our clients in capturing the vast opportunities from the region's economic reforms."

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HSBC

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